



United States Department of Interior
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

BLM COMPLETES ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

MILES CITY –The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Miles City Field Office has completed a re-write of an environmental assessment (EA) on Fidelity Corporation’s applications for permit to drill 85 federal coal bed natural gas wells near Decker, Mont. The Decision Record/Finding of No Significant Impact (DR/FONSI) signed today again approves the applications and supercedes the DR/FONSI signed on September 16, 2003.

BLM Montana State Director Marty Ott remanded the original environmental document to the agency’s Miles City Field Office on December 9, 2003, and issued a stay order after four groups requested a State Director Review of the decision. The remand decision also included a stay halting all operations connected with the federal gas wells in question.

This additional environmental review rewrote the entire EA with special consideration given to surface water quality, groundwater drawdown, produced water storage, land application of produced water, wildlife resources, air quality, cultural resources, social and economic conditions, and cumulative impacts.

The groups requesting the review were the Northern Cheyenne Tribe, Native Action, Biodiversity Conservation Alliance, and the Northern Plains Resource Council.

A copy of the complete EA has been mailed to them and will be available to the public at BLM offices in Billings and Miles City and on the web at www.mt.blm.gov later this week.